

RAIN TALK

FOR BOYS & GIRLS
AT SCHOOL AND HOME

IT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.

VOL. IX.—No. 59.

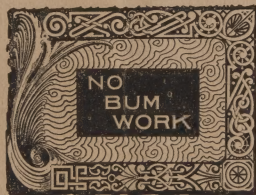
NEW YORK, JULY, 1890.

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PLAIN TALK.

VOL. IX.

NEW YORK, JULY, 1890.

No. 59.

A Wife's Heroic Deed.

THERE had been a strike among the mill hands in Clearfield. A long, bitter strike. The attitude of the employers, and of those employed, remained the same for months, but as the summer was passing away and the mill owners still maintained the position they had first taken, one by one the many waiters came back with heavy hearts asking to be allowed to again join their song with the clash of the loom, as in the days of old before the human fire brands had appeared in their midst.

The mill owners, reluctantly steeling their hearts against those suffering mortals, in that, as they had not asked the operatives to go out, and as the mill could not run with half the force, one department depending upon the other their ultimatum was that all must return, or none. A few weeks more passed and the strike was over, and the hands with the exception of those who were the prime movers in bringing the trouble about, were again at their accustomed places. Twelve weeks of idleness was a hard blow to the wage workers of Clearfield, and the sums that had been hoarded against approaching old age soon disappeared. They saw the folly of their action and it was a bitter lesson of experience to them. To the company it meant little. Ever successful, those interested in it financially received a handsome dividend at each season's close.

For years the old mill had stood on the winding river bank, its mellow toned bell wakening reverberating echoes, from the green hillsides, and until this strike had come among the operatives no murmur of discontent had ever arisen. Those who had retired from active labor had earned their first dime within those grim old walls, and now they saw with pride their children and grand-children following in their footsteps. Honest toil was freely given and commensurate wages received in return, and all seemed to be a happy, prosperous people.

The village was not a large one, its entire population falling some short of two thousand souls, and the mill being the principal industry gave employment to about three hundred and fifty of the whole. Other minor industries flourished, but upon the mill depended the prosperity of the place.

The labor troubles of 1884 brought a change to this

quiet place with its sober, industrious inhabitants. Emisaries of evil workers found their way here and soon their dreadful influence bred a feeling of dissatisfaction. The honest toilers, whose limit of the world seemed to end at the horizon, so homelike and peaceful were they, listened eagerly to the fanciful tales poured out by these social communists. They were told of the immense fortunes being amassed by their brother workers in the neighboring towns and cities; were made to believe that they were veritable slaves; that the iron grip of a hard task master was so strongly upon them that only by uprising in a body could they assert their rights and win what justly belonged to them.

The fire was kindled, but it burned slowly. Instead of innocent games and amusements, which in days gone by had served to satisfy their few desires; instead of the quiet pipe by the vine covered porch; instead a frolic with the children as the evening shadows came on, a change had come upon them. An unseen evil had silently crept in—the evil of discontent—and nightly those rugged men gathered in the stores, at the street corners, by the mill gates—everywhere, and discussed the situation, longing for the glittering wealth which they felt should be theirs.

Several months the storm was gradually gathering, and while many looked upon the concerted more with disfavor, they were willing to go with the majority if it would bring the ease and pleasure which had been represented. Satan's followers brought a constant pressure to bear upon the wavering ones, and finally the storm burst, taking tangible form in a petition signed by a majority of the employees, which was presented to those in authority demanding an increase of wages of twenty per cent. at the beginning of the next month. The increase was kindly yet firmly refused. A second petition followed, with the threat of a strike if the advance was not granted. Again a refusal, but from the officials came a communication which covered every point presented by the murmuring discontents, and even more. Briefly stated it told of the honorable reputation which the mill owners had gained in their endeavors to do right; of the wages paid, which were above the average of similar corporations; of



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the peaceful character of those employed; of the years of steady labor without a voice being raised in dissent, of the numerous holidays granted without loss of time, and of the knowledge of what had been transpiring in the place during the past few months regarding the threatened strike, and of the hirelings of evil who had obtained situations in the mill for the sole purpose of sowing the seeds of discord. The last appeal was made to their honor as men. That nothing could be accomplished by going out, and that they were dupes of a few unscrupulous persons, the names of those persons being set forth in the communication. In concluding the management stated that provided a strike could not be averted, those few men would be discharged, but if matters resumed the natural course they would be retained subject to dismissal should their misrepresentations continue.

Nothing would satisfy and the strike came. A hush of death came over that little place as no more the bell woke the stillness of the quiet morning air. The women went about with trembling voices, not fully realizing the full force of what the strike meant, and as their fathers, husbands and brothers revealed nothing, they wondered, when, if ever, it would end. When three weary months of waiting and praying had passed away it was over, and the wage earners were the losers, but they were wiser men. Blindly following those who led them for their own benefit, these willing tools of humanity wreckers, shortly found that the bag of gold where the rainbow kissed the hills was the same will-o'-the-wisp as of old. In the midst of the strife they had been deserted by those whose fiery words first caused them to turn from the paths which had for so many years been trodden by their fathers and grandfathers.

John Tomlin, Rufus Kingsbury, and Jacob Strong were those by whom the entire trouble had been brought about, and now that it was over and they had failed, the villainy of their character stood revealed, but by their suaveness of manner they had managed to accumulate quite a bit of money, turned over to them by the striking mill hands as an "emergency fund." They proved at last to be low, unscrupulous men, and in their dissolute days which succeeded the strike they were shunned by all who had heretofore listened to their smooth fabrications, as the lowest of the low. Such debauchery and degradation had never before been displayed in Clearfield, and the citizens warned them to leave the place, which they made haste to do, knowing full well the determination of the men with whom they had to deal.

During the months the mill was closed several changes had been made, which had long been contemplated, and when the operatives returned to their accustomed places they were pleased with what had been done for their comfort. The enforced idleness caused orders to accumulate until it became necessary upon re-opening to run night and day until the most important of them had been filled.

It would be too great a strain upon the operatives to do double work constantly, and as there was no extra help it was given out that those who wished could return every second night and work until twelve o'clock, receiving an extra allowance proportionate to their day's pay. Many of those who had been idle availed themselves of the opportunity, but promptly at 12 o'clock the heavy wheels ceased to revolve and the machinery became silent.

Elbert French had been overseer of the establishment for several years. He had worked his way upward from the lowest to the highest position through honest industry. Trusted implicitly by those whose wealth controlled the property, he worked for their interests as if they were his own. Early and late he was at his post, and at midnight his was the hand which gave the throbbing, trembling structure its rest. He was a faithful, painstaking man and his worth had been proven many times. His little home stood across the stream, a picturesque cottage half-hidden by the wide spreading trees, and from his office window he could wave a kiss to his life companion, who rejoiced with him in his successes, and grieved with him when matters went contrary to his desires.

During this time of overwork Lella French would sit up for her husband and he was always sure to see the cheering ray of light streaming from the sitting-room window when he bent his weary steps homeward. Oftentimes she would go out to meet him and at others would go even to the mill and remain with him until the worry and care of the night

was over.

It was nearing the time when the order would be issued to run on regular time, and as the strain became more wearing upon French more often would his faithful wife stay by his side and strive to take his mind from that which was stealing the ruddy glow from his cheeks and penciling heavy circles of care around his eyes.

One of these evenings she started from her home, almost without a thought. It was past eleven when the impulse came upon her to go. She knew not why she went, so suddenly came the impulse, but mechanically seizing her shawl and pulling it tightly about her neck, she sprang down the hillside. A little path which her husband had made was a short cut to the bridge and she knew every foot of it by night as well as by day.

The night was calm and still, and as she hastened around the curve made by the bend in the river, she heard voices. What could it mean? Who could be out at that hour, unless some of the laborers wearying of their toil had left the mill at an earlier hour? were thoughts which rapidly came to her mind. But then, she thought, none employed in the rooms which were doing extra work lived on that side of the river. She stood perplexed for a moment and then she crept stealthily along the pathway, feeling guilty as she did so, knowing full well that to step boldly out and meet them, whoever they might be, would have been more honorable. She did not fear danger, as no one in that law-abiding village would offer her the slightest harm. Every one loved her; and to her many owed their gratitude for little acts of kindness prompted only by a woman's love for womankind. She approached a few steps nearer to where she heard the voices, and the little bridge, moving almost imperceptibly along the river, brought a sound to her ears that nearly forced a scream from her lips. Her hands clutched convulsively; her loosened shawl fell to the ground; she felt herself falling as if from a severe shock, but by the most superhuman effort she partially regained her composure and stood listening, while her heart throbbed violently and her breath came in quick gasps, notwithstanding her great effort to calm herself as their words came to her with terrible significance.

"No he won't see his little dearie to-night if this here battery works. The cartridge that's hitched to the other end is a never fail, and it'll h'ist that buildin' into the air mighty quick when I pull the string."

The voice she recognized and tremblingly she waited for the response which immediately followed.

"It's a dangerous thing to do, Tomlin, and I wish I was out of it, but we all hate young French with his country air so we'd better let him go up with the mill. But say, when did you get the cartridge and how did you fix it?" asked the second voice.

"I got it down to Compton last night. 'Twas one the boys had for the big mill up in the run last summer, and 'twould have been used if the blokes hadn't come down with their rocks. I lugged it over here after dark and this evenin' I sneaked it down back of the mill, went in through the window near the race, and then I had things my own way. I put it in the little jog over the new timbers that have just been put in to steady the wheel, and when it goes off it will go both ways. It just fitted the place, snug, and the lip on the overlays holds it fast. I run the wires over the rope walk, over the race, then out through the window, across the river by the town bridge, and down here, and this little box will soon let the moon-light shine among the ruins."

"But how can you tell when French is in reach of the effect of it?"

"Say, Kingsbury, I guess you don't know much about dynamite, do you? That cartridge will blow that shop all to pieces; but I'm going to make a sure job you see. French is the last man to leave the mill, and when that wheel stops at 12 o'clock I'll know that his hand is on the lever, then up she goes. Strong is at the cross-roads, yonder, with a team he borrowed for the occasion. That will take us pretty near Compton. We'll then start the horse home again and foot it into town, and when the dear, good people of this sleepy town have found out that their pretty mill has been blown down by the wind we will be in another state, see? We haven't been here much lately, so that lets out

Lella French waited to hear no more. Her husband? O no! it could not be, yes, they said French; there could be no mistake, and in that instant resolution took possession of her to save her husband's life.

At 12 o'clock the key would be applied and it was past 11 when she left her home. Would she be in time? The Lord who never forsakes the righteous would not see her widowed by such fiends. She drew gradually away from the men, and running back to the main road darted along the way as if on wings. Praying that she might not be too late she flew across the bridge and up the path that led to the rear of the mill. Her purpose was not to go around to the main entrance and bid her husband fly. It would consume valuable time. Her only hope was to gain an entrance by the rear door, pull the cartridge from its resting place and sink it in the deep waters of the race. She sprang down the steps and threw herself against the door, but it did not move. It was locked!

"O God," she cried in her anguish, "can I not save him? Do not! O do not forsake me now."

She knew every turn and twist, every path and entrance to that old building, for had she not in her childhood played in its sombre shadows, and gleefully swung on the same rope bridge now crossed by the deadly wires.

The flume door! She had not thought of it until now. At least one chance was left her, and the minutes crept on. Away she flew again, around the building, her borrowed strength urging her torn and bleeding feet over the rough way. Without waiting to descend the short flight of stairs which led to the door she threw her weakened body into the darkness, as even then the ponderous wheel had begun to revolve more slowly, and the hurrying feet of the operatives sounded far above her. Her full but feeble weight was hurled against the door. Once, twice, thrice, and it waved backward. Into the inky darkness she darted; she crossed the narrow platform, sprang upon the bridge, groped along its side until she felt the wire in hand, and praying again to heaven to sustain her, united her failing strength in a sudden, strong pull and sank in a swoon upon the bridge.

It was a night never to be forgotten by Elbert French, when upon arriving at his home he could find it deserted. Back he went over the beaten path. Stumbling along in his haste he found the shawl she had unwittingly dropped. Was she murdered? Had she thrown herself into the river? Where oh where could she be? Again to his home and again to the mill he went, calling her name but in vain. Daylight came while he still searched and as the operatives one by one returned to their work they found him with wild and haggard looks standing near the mill entrance nearly devoid of reason.

In a few words he told them and they, too, joined in the search, and the open door soon told the tale.

They found her where she had fallen, still unconscious. Her mission was successful. She had saved all for which she had risked her life. The cartridge was still intact where it had been placed, one wire still in position, while the other had been drawn from it and was tightly grasped in her hands. To her home she was tenderly borne, where she was cared for by those to whom she had rendered many kindnesses. Her reason had not deserted her, but she lay and moaned gently as if a fear was upon her that she had been too late.

Anxious weeks passed before she was able to tell of the part she had enacted in that terrible scene, and when she did her daring act was sounded and resounded in praises for miles around.

The would-be perpetrators were never apprehended. The fact that the cartridge failed to explode at the proper time was sufficient reason for them to know that something was wrong, and they decamped without even taking their discharging battery. The whole plan was traced from where they were overheard to the place in which the cartridge had been deposited, and when the enormity of the crime was thoroughly impressed upon the inhabitants of Clearfield, they arose en masse to discover, if possible, the would-be murderers.

No one could tell who they were but Lella French, and when she had recovered sufficiently to tell, they were far away. The event made a deep impression upon the minds of the mill operatives, and they testified to the regard they

held for the heroic woman in many ways.

They still live on the hillside, Elbert and Lella, but he is one of the owners now. The old mill bell calls the operatives as of yore. Strikes and rumors of strikes in other places have no sympathy with those whose own sad experience had nearly proved so disastrous. That one experience was enough, and to those sober, diligent men and women the event of that one night seems a horrible dream.

Ida Lewis.

THIRTY-THREE years ago, in the little Newport paper, there appeared an item which stated that a sixteen-year-old girl had saved four lads from drowning in the harbor. She lived, the story went on to relate, in the light-house on Lime Rock, and had seen from its windows the boat capsize, and, unaided, effected the rescue of its occupants. Whoever in the gay city by the sea read the brief account doubtless deemed it a brave act by one so young and of the weaker sex, but gave it little further thought. Not long afterwards, however, there was printed another item, but this time a longer description of the saving, during a frightful storm at night, of a boatman by the same young girl, his cries for assistance coming to her in her watch-tower on the sea. Soon, again, it was told far and near that two soldiers crossing from the fort to the city had fallen through the ice. With the same treacherous element cracking and swaying beneath her feet, this intrepid girl had thrown them a rope, both in their dying agonies grasping it and being saved.

Nothing more thrilling, nothing more grand has ever been chronicled than the next deed of this woman on that awful night when two drowning men owed their lives to her fearlessness once more.

As years went on like acts were performed, and men told of the tenderness of sympathy of this heroine for brute kind as well as man, as shown in another perilous rescue at night of two men, when she returned for a sheep, their fellow voyager, and the cause of their accident. The list rolled up and up, though many names were never publicly added to the fifteen acknowledged, and men and women began to ask who this woman was, and the name of Ida Lewis rang round the world coupled with that of Grace Darling.

Interest ever attaches itself to the life and personality of a heroine, and surely no greater than Ida Lewis has graced this country. Now nearly fifty years of age, she stands pre-eminently the noblest woman the world has known for years: courage, skill, independence of action, qualities not generally attributed to a woman, being hers by every right. When her father, Captain Hosea Lewis, was made keeper of Lime Rock Light, Ida was a thin, delicate girl of thirteen. The light-house is situated on one of the rocks of lime stone abounding in Newport Harbor, and contains but few hundred feet of space. Until Miss Lewis had loam brought to form a garden, not a blade of grass could be grown. As the only means of communication with Newport was by water, the young girl learned the use of the oars, and the water became to her as familiar as to any web-footed fowl. Ida grew fearless and strong, and, possessed as she is of that happy faculty of seeing sunshine back of every cloud, took care and trouble, a life inheritance, as lightly as she has her years. Her acts of bravery brought her into prominence not at all relished, especially when in three months 10,000 strangers invaded her home.

Sums of money have time and again been sent her by known and unknown parties, but of all the gifts poured upon her—each prized but declared by their unspoiled recipient not at all deserved—none has pleased her so much as a keg of maple sugar and a box of oat meal. From way out West they came, from an old gentleman of seventy, a farmer, who wrote that he had not his thousands to lay at the feet of the bravest of women, but he sent the best of what little he possessed. Miss Lewis dislikes both articles, but ate some of each, so much did the words of the sender touch her. It was a day to be remembered, that day with America's Grace Darling in Lime Rock light, a lucky moon-stone day, white and beautiful to treasure. To but one woman in the land has a monument been erected. But some day America will build another, and that to the memory of Ida Lewis, the heroine.

THE AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER.

BY J. M. S. HAMILTON.

THIRD PAPER.

AFTER toning the picture comes the mounting, which means pasting it upon a piece of card-board. The paste used for mounting should never be made of any material which might contain the slightest particle of acid, otherwise when fermentation takes place, after the picture has been mounted, your labor of love will be found to have been wasted, as the acid in the paste will discolor the picture and in place of the beautifully toned print you thought you possessed, will be found a horrible looking picture with no color or tone in it, and even this picture would soon fade and leave nothing but the memory of what had been, and the experience for future guidance. Several receipts for making a paste which would not contain acid might be given, but for the amateur we think a paste made from ordinary laundry starch will answer all purposes. It should be made in the thick jelly form which we all can remember to have seen about the kitchen on that ever recurring wash-day.

The print if allowed to dry after the toning and washing process has a tendency to curl or roll up which makes it a pretty hard matter to put the paste upon it without getting some of it upon the face of the picture, which must be avoided under all circumstances, as the slightest spot of paste upon the face of the picture will detract greatly from



SACHEL CAMERA.

the enjoyment one might take in looking at it. It is better to mount the prints before they become dry and begin to roll, as they are more easily handled.

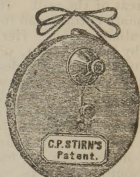
Avoid also getting the paste on the edges of the card upon which you are mounting the picture. To do this and get your picture upon the proper place on the card is not as easy as would appear, as the card upon which the picture is to be mounted is a little larger and it is difficult to place the picture in the exact spot the first time. A good way to do is to take a second card of exactly the same size, lay your picture upon it in exactly the place desired and mark it with a lead pencil; then take a sharp knife and cut out the square corresponding to the exact size of the picture. This will leave you the margin corresponding to the margin of the picture when mounted. Place this margin on the card upon which you intend to mount the picture and fasten it so that it cannot move; then put the paste upon your print and place the print upon the card in or through the square which you have made. This square you can use continually and it will not make any difference if you do get paste upon it. Do not use too much paste upon your print, as when you press it down upon the card the paste will ooze out around the edges and soil it. Be particular also not to allow any of the hairs of the brush you may use or lumps of paste to remain upon the print before placing upon the card.

After placing the print upon the card and to insure the exclusion of all air-bubbles, it should be firmly pressed down with a roller made of rubber called a "Squeegee." This can be made by taking a piece of rubber garden-hose and inserting through it a round piece of wood allowing a margin to project on either side, to be used as handles. The

picture after being properly mounted, and to prevent the action of the atmosphere upon the delicate silver salts used, is covered with a varnish or transparent paste which also gives it a brilliant finish. This paste will be furnished by any photographic supply store and is called Encaustic Paste. The same result is arrived at by placing upon the surface of the picture a mixture of Castile soap dissolved in methylate spirit, and running the mounted picture between warm bars of iron which is called burnishing it. For the amateur, as desirable results can be obtained by coating the picture with "Encaustic Paste."



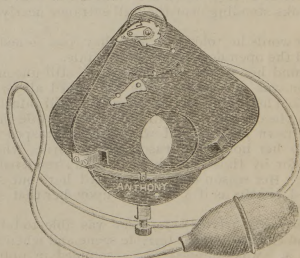
LILLIPUT CAMERA.



VEST CAMERA.

The introduction of the gelatine dry plate may be said to have created a revolution in the art of photography. Under the old collodion process few cared to linger in the dark room while the picture was being developed, owing to the disagreeable odor but with the development of the dry plate, a very slight odor only is perceptible and that only when using the soda or "fixing bath." Aside from the bad odor attached to the wet plate process, the liability to stain attached to the chemicals used also deterred the novice from engaging in the amusement.

The dry plate has more recently been improved to the extent that photographs can now be taken in colors. It has not been found possible as yet to reproduce all colors in a photograph but those which it has been found possible to produce range from the deepest hue of ruby-red to a light orange, with several shades of red and yellow, and the most brilliant blue that can be imagined; also violet which is especially brilliant. Perhaps in the near future all colors may be produced by the camera and then hand painting will become one of the lost arts. The difficulty now is to discover some light under which these colored plates can be developed, as the ordinary ruby lamp has been found inadequate for that purpose, or if used, should be set some dis-



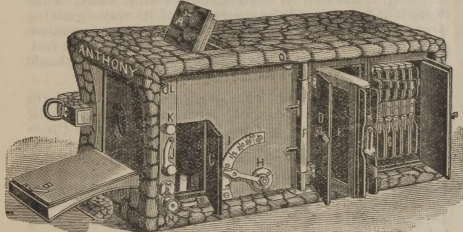
INSTANTANEOUS SHUTTER.

tance from the developing tray, and the plate developed in the shadow. Plates made of celluloid, which are developed the same as an ordinary plate, make very pretty transparencies for window decorations.

Nearly every locality now possesses a "Camera Club" wherein the discoveries and experiences of any one member is considered the heritage of all, and where, aside from the social pleasure received, one may meet with those whose desires run in the same direction, and where one may hear discourses upon photography, and find all the appliances necessary for developing plates. If your immediate locality does not possess such a club then the "Chautauqua School of Photography" stands ready to furnish instruction and information to all by mail wheresoever they may be.

The amateur should not be disheartened by the failure, possibly, of the first experiments in photography. Unless one has an instructor at his elbow from start to finish, it is almost impossible to achieve success in the beginning. The greatest annoyance he must guard against is over-exposure, but this, to a very great extent, can be avoided by examining the box in which the dry plates are purchased. On the end of each box should be plainly printed the "Sensitometer," meaning to indicate the sensitiveness of the plate and to show how long it should be exposed to secure good results. If the "Sensitometer" indicates 40, good results may be expected from the plates, on a bright sunny day, upon giving them four seconds exposure; those marked 25 have been given two seconds' exposure with excellent results.

Another source of evil to the amateur is over-development. In the development, be particular, as before stated, not to allow the under side of the plate to become black; let only the upper, or gelatine side become black. Be careful about this, for an over-developed plate is as disappointing as an over-exposed plate. If you have the picture clear and distinct upon the ground-glass when focussed, you may be sure it will be so produced upon the plate, providing it has had the proper exposure and is properly developed, and your lens has not flared.



SATCHEL CAMERA, WITH LENS AND PLATE COMPARTMENT EXPOSED

This may occur by something bright coming within the range of view of the lens. A flared plate presents, where the flare occurs, a black spot which is totally impenetrable by light, and the picture, when printed from this plate, is black where it is flared.

When the plate is placed in the soda, after being taken from the developer, be sure and leave it until both sides become black, lifting it out from time to time to examine it and see if the fine lines are coming out plainly. If you cannot get your room perfectly dark in the day-time, it is perhaps as well to wait until night when you may select any room in the house to do your developing in without fear of some one breaking in upon you and bringing a flood of light with them.

Blisters are another of the great annoyances of the amateur, both on the developed plate and on the print. To have procured a really excellent negative, having all the lines sharp-cut and well-defined, but when placed upon the rack to dry to see a horrible blister appear upon it is, to say the least, very vexatious. The first idea is to stick a pin in it, and if this is done the plate may as well be cast upon the ash-heap at once. Blisters are more the fault of the plate manufacturer than the amateur, therefore if one brand of plate is found subject to this failing it is better to substitute another at once. With the print the amateur may be able to correct the defect by giving it a bath in salt and water when the blister is first observed.

HOW TO DO IT.

Original contributions solicited for this page. Send sketches, no matter how rough with descriptions, and when possible, illustrations will be made.

How Cablegrams are Transmitted.

WITH the first long submarine cables great difficulties were encountered in sending through them a current of electricity of sufficient power to record the messages rap-

idly. The methods for overcoming these difficulties and in use at present are as follows:

Keys, which, when depressed, transmit positive and negative currents, are employed at the sending station in connection with the regulation battery. The current of the battery does not pass directly into the cable, but into a condenser, which passes it into the submarine line. This greatly increases the force of the current used and serves to cut off interfering ground currents. The instruments first employed in receiving cablegrams was a reflecting galvanometer. Upon the magnet of this instrument is carried a small curved mirror. A lamp is placed before the mirror and behind a screen in which there is a vertical slit. Flashes of light moving across this slit as the needles move from left to right, indicate to the trained eye of the operator the letters in the message being transmitted. But this method of recording messages was found to tax the eyesight of the operator severely, a few years' work often rendering them almost if not totally blind. Recognizing the fact that there must be something wrong with such a system, inventors set about repairing the defect, which resulted in perfecting the syphon galvanometer, which has all but superseded all other devices.

In the syphon receiver the movements of the needle are recorded by means of ink spurted from a fine tube. This tube is attached to a coil suspended between two fixed magnets, which swing to the right or left as the pulsations pass through it. The syphon galvanometer is a great improvement, is not hard on the eyes and enables the operator to receive much more rapidly than with the old flash receiver.

Some Hints for the Ladies.

A WOMAN who is trying to reform her housekeeping finds that her affairs move more satisfactorily during the week if the usual order is reversed, and Saturday instead of Monday is taken for laundry work—that is, for the washing part of it. She has bread and cake made on Friday, which is the sweeping day, and the beds are also changed on that day. Saturday afternoon is used for extra preparations for the Sunday dinner and in putting the kitchen in order; so that when Sunday dawns it does not bring with it the blue shadow of Monday. It is a day of rest for mind and body, and, better still, it is found on Monday morning that her servants are well rested from the work of Saturday, and in better trim for ironing than when two heavy days' work follow each other.—*New York Evening Post.*

Wash ink stains from carpets with milk, and afterward with hot water, when fresh. Old ink stains must first be wetted, then rubbed with salts of lemon and washed quickly. Ink stains on mahogany must be obliterated by touching the spot with a feather dipped in a teaspoonful of water to which a few drops of nitre have been added, and directly the stain disappears. Rub it over quickly with a cloth dipped in cold water.

Apply linseed oil and turpentine in equal parts with a soft cloth to the white spots on your furniture. Rub the oil stains on your lamp globes with spirits of salts and wash in warm water. Clean your milky looking water bottles by filling them with potato parings, vinegar, and a very little soda; let them stand for a little, shake well, and wash in cold water. And brighten your silver by boiling it up in soapy water for a few hours, cover with whiting moistened with some spirits, dry in the oven, and rub off and polish with chamois.

To clean carpets, go over them once a week with a broom dipped in hot water, to which a little turpentine has been added. Wring a cloth in the hot water, and wipe under the pieces of furniture too heavy to be moved.

Any kind of a bath, or any other process that will produce a general perspiration, and thus bring about a reaction, will cure a cold. Simply inhaling fresh air largely, by deep inspiration, is sufficient to nip an incipient cold in the bud.

To remove grease from garments, dissolve a table-spoonful of salt in four table-spoonfuls of alcohol, shake well, and apply with a sponge.

PHILATELY.

ALVAH DAVISON, - - - - - EDITOR,

176 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

"NIAGARA FALLS in '91" seems to be the unanimous cry of the A. P. A. members. As this plan has been mentioned at three conventions, it seems likely to get the plum this time.

Messrs. Robert S. Lehman and John M. Sheridan have resigned as secretaries of the Brooklyn Philatelic Club, the former taking up his residence in Baltimore.

Among other attractions of the convention period will be an auction sale held by the Scott Stamp and Coin Co., on one of the evenings. This is held to enable the visitors to see a full-fledged stamp auction—a novelty to many.

The auction sale of the Scott Stamp and Coin Co., I believe, was to have been held on Tuesday evening, but in deference to the plans of the Convention committee, they have changed the night to Wednesday.

I have seen it stated that the *Philatelic News* of Cambridgeboro, Pa., had dropped from the ranks, but this I believe is only temporary. Before many months it will be found dispensing news and notes of interest to philatelists. Brother Wilber isn't the one to give up so easily.

The Western Philatelic Union, which is composed largely of Western collectors, is booming its Association through circulars. The idea is held by some that only collectors west of the Mississippi can be members of this body, but that the idea is erroneous is proved by the circulars being sent to Eastern collectors.

Mr. H. E. Deats passed through the city a few days ago en route for Narragansett Pier. He will return in time for the Convention, at which a choice selection of his proofs will be shown. His friends will be glad to hear that he has about recovered from the trouble he had with his eyesight.

A writer in a recent magazine states that the *Metropolitan Philatelist* will go under in about a year. He either knowingly prevaricates or else he is ignorant of the stuff of which the board of managers of that paper, is made. If Corwin, Scott, Gregory, Bogert and Schuman, backed by the three New York societies, can't run a paper for more than a year, then the public will be greatly mistaken.

The *Philatelist* tells of a package which was mailed in Australia, weighing fifteen pounds, on which the postage was about fifty-five dollars. If such a price was paid for carrying that package, the party sending it was either very foolish or he was anxious to spend his money. It could have been sent by express, insured, around the world for less than half the sum stated.

On the evening of June ninth a union meeting of the National, Brooklyn and Staten Island societies, was held at Stapleton. The attendance was not very large, but many topics were discussed. The warm weather has a bad effect on the society meetings, it being difficult at times to get a quorum.

It is understood in New York that Mr. E. B. Sterling, exchange superintendent of the American Philatelic Association, will soon give up his office. It will be voluntary in his part, and with the change of men will probably come changes in the exchange laws. It is more than likely that the cash system will be adopted at the coming convention, and this, although it will undoubtedly decrease the amount taken from the sheets, will enable the returns to be made at short periods.

There are many readers of this column, who reside in and near New Ytrk, and who are members of the A. P. A. To all such I would extend an invitation to attend the Convention at some time during its sessions. It will be an excellent opportunity to see a large body of stamp collectors, while Tiffany, Scott, Corwin, Sterling and others are attractions not on exhibition every day. A stamp exhibit

will be held at the close at which rarities such as the "Brattleboro" will be common as sand.

It is thought by some that the Convention will last for more than three days owing to the matter of incorporation and other important changes being contemplated. That the East intends to run the thing according to their ideas is a foregone conclusion, and the fact that three of the "prominents" are raking in proxies from far and near, leaves little hope that Western ideas will get more than a hearing. The wish is cherished by many that a law will be passed this year prohibiting, under penalty of expulsion, any member from soliciting proxies through the mail. Those who do so may have the good of the Association at heart, and yet it is thought and generally believed that when a man spends fifteen or twenty dollars to get proxies, there must be "a nigger in de fence" somewhere.

In pleasing contrast to the other papers, those staunch monthlies the *American Philatelist*, *Philatelic Journal of America* and the *American Journal of Philately*, still come around as regularly as ever. Were it not for them, I fear we would almost forget our favorite hobby during the hot spell. The *Philatelic Journal of America*, the oldest stamp magazine now published, is in its sixth volume, and from all appearances has many more before it. Started in October, 1884, it has seen its contemporaries drop away, while in itself it has pursued the even tenor of its way, growing larger as the years rolled on and its patronage increased, until now it stands a head and shoulders above all the rest. With age, experience and the public confidence it should hold the field for years to come.

It is really wonderful what an effect the summer months of June, July and August have upon the philatelic papers. This is partly because the youthful editors throw down the pen for the fishing-rod or tennis-racket; and mainly because business is so dull in the stamp line that the dealers will not advertise, and without the advertising patronage, stamp papers cannot, or do not exist. Many of the papers only suspend for the hot spell, while some suspend so long that they forget to come to life again. As the Fall rolls around, the field will be covered with announcements of newspapers while the confiding collector will prepare to "chuck in" his quarter and run all risks.

The programme of festivities made up for the A. P. A. members has been decided on, and is as follows: Sessions will be held in the Hall of Lincoln Club all day Monday, August fourth, and in the evening of that day another session will be called to enable all to be present at the same time. On Tuesday a morning and afternoon session will be held, and after them the members will go in a body to West Brighton Beach via the Culver route. This takes them by water to Bay Ridge and thence by rail. A dinner will be served at the Casino, one of the largest restaurants on the Island, at about six and after it the crowd will be taken to Manhattan Beach to witness Pain's magnificent spectacle of the siege of Vera Cruz and the accompanying fireworks. After the pyrotechnic display there will still be two or three hours time left to see the sights before leaving for the city.

The coming convention and election of the A. P. A. is the all-absorbing topic in philatelic circles. The interest in the election centers in the offices of Vice President and International Secretary, for each of which there are several candidates. The President, Secretary and Treasurer will be the same as heretofore. There were several persons spoken of as candidates by different papers, but the names not being forwarded to the Board of Trustees, they do not appear on the official list sent out. The convention will be held, commencing August fourth, at the Rooms of the Lincoln Club in Waverly Place, and all collectors whether members or not, are invited to be present. The sessions will last for two or three days. The visiting members will be treated to a visit to Coney Island where they will see the elephant and have dinner.

THERE IS SOMETHING so attractive in riches that the larger heap generally collects from the smaller.—*Goldsmith.*

THE

American Archaeological Association.

President, A. F. BERLIN, Allentown, Pa.
 Vice-President, Dr. D. S. McARTHUR, Lacrosse, Wis.
 Secretary, ALVAH DAVISON, 176 Broadway, N. Y. City.
 Treasurer, E. J. SHERIDAN, 235 Adelphi Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.
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 Corresponding Secretary, Board of Trustees, JOS. WIGGLESWORTH, Wilmington Del.; E. J. ROCKWOOD, 10 Coral Street, Worcester, Mass.; G. L. FANCHER, West Winsted, Conn.

Secretary's Report.

WE ARE now approaching the end of the second year of the Association's existence, and the time has come to choose officers for the next two years.

The writer has been renominated for the position of Secretary, but he feels that he must decline, not because of lack of interest, but because a new man, one with energy and push in him, and who can devote his time and thoughts to the good of the Association, will fill the place better.

His business frequently takes him to different parts of the country and during his absence, the Association matters must stand. This should not be so and he trusts the members will consider well the fitness of each candidate for office, for on them depends the prosperity of the Association for the next two years.

The election will be in charge of the Board of Trustees, and from them the members will hear at the proper time.

It is very essential that a convention be held this year, as matters of interest can then be suggested and if necessary be incorporated in the laws. The results of the election will be announced at the convention, and all members are urged if possible to attend at the time and place agreed upon and of which due notice will be given in this paper.

Thanks are due Mr. L. V. McWhorter for the following

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP.

Jno. Valdes, Jr., Taos, New Mex.—References: Taos County Bank; Alex. Gussdorf, Taos, New Mex.
 Wm. T. Miller, 1021 Avery St., Parkersburg, W. Va.—References: Jas. R. Mehon; J. L. Buckley, Sheriff, Parkersburg, W. Va.
 H. L. Cadwalader, Coronado, Kan.—References: Geo. Jarmin, Leoti, Kan.; H. L. Mincek, Coronado, Kan.

NEW MEMBERS.

No. 34 Brevoort Butler, Enola, Miss.

DELINQUENT MEMBERS.

The dues 17, 27 and 30 are behind, and if not paid within 30 days their names will be dropped from the roll.
 ALVAH DAVISON, Secretary.

Librarian's Report.

DURING the last two months, I have received for the library, from Prof. J. H. Lewis, St. Paul, Minn., a lot of clippings, and two pamphlets, *Sculptured Rock at Templecan, Wis.*, and catalogue of Macalester Museum of History and Archeology, describing some copper relics, of the J. H. Lewis Collection. Prof. L. writes me that to May 30, he had surveyed 475 mounds this year. I also received clippings from P. T. office.

CHARLES A. PERKINS, Librarian.

Scrapers.

I WOULD like to ask, if any member of the A. A. A., ever saw a scraper, that showed any evidence of having been used? It would seem that if they were used for that purpose, that the cutting edge would show the wear, but a careful examination of some fifty fails to show any trace of having been used, the edge in every case being as sharp, and keen as when made. The Indians seem to have been indifferent as to material, as I find them in every variety of stone used in making arrow-points. The form in nearly every case is the same, one surface flat, the back rounded, one end being brought to a cutting edge, by chipping, and many times, there would seem to have been much time and labor expended on this end, as the chipping is very finely done. In almost every specimen examined the remaining end was left unfinished though a few that I have seen have both ends finished. Those found in N. E. are mostly small, the smallest being $\frac{1}{4}$ by one inch and the largest $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the small ones being more common.

When I began collecting I took but little notice of scrapers, thinking them unfinished points, or accidental form of arrow-heads but as I kept finding them, I began to study them more, and on being shown fifty in one lot, and forty in another I concluded that they were not accidents, and that the maker had some idea in his mind while making them. The fact that so many are found all over the country, and all of the same form would seem to indicate that they were an article of every-day use. A scraper from Ohio is as much like one from Massachusetts as two peas, the only difference being in the material, in either case the stone most convenient being used. In Massachusetts I find them of porphyry, feldite, flint, and a few of quartz. I have two that are round disks, but that form is not common. I have thought sometimes that the unfinished end might have been used as a shank to fasten into a handle.

Dr. C. C. Abbott in "Primitive Industry" says of scrapers that they are found in England, Ireland, France and other countries, and that the form is the same in every country, and that modern specimens (Esquimaux) are identical with the old ones." He also says that in Eastern Massachusetts they are seldom found. While not abundant, more or less of them are found every year and we do not consider them as rare specimens.—C. A. P.

"Lost Art."

IN THE May number of PLAIN TALK, Mr L. W. Stilwell, under the heading of "Gem Arrow Points," adheres to the "Lost Art" theory, concerning the mode of manufacturing the Oregon bird arrow points, Science is well acquainted with the "Lost Art" of making these bird points. I have in my cabinet a fine and well-made duplicate of one variety of these tiny points, and it was chipped with a bone handle by a well-known archaeologist still living and lively. These points can be duplicated as well as any other variety of relic.—L. V. Mc WORTER, BERLIN, WEST VA.

The Cliff-Dwellers of Colorado.

ONE OF the most attractive portions of Colorado, if in the entire West, is that part of the State in which are found the cliff dwellings of a long extinct race. The district in which these ruins are located covers an area of nearly 6,000 square miles, chiefly in Colorado, but which includes narrow belts in the adjacent territories of New Mexico, Utah and Arizona.

The ruins of this region, like most others of the extreme west and south, are the remnants in a great measure of stone structures. It is evident, however, that a great portion of the villages and dwellings of the lowlands which comprise this district have been of material other than stone, frequently, doubtless, of rubble and adobe combined.

The cliff houses confirm in shape to the floor of the niche or the shelf on which they are built. They are of firm, neat masonry, and the manner in which they are attached or cemented to the cliffs is simply marvelous. Their construction has cost a great deal of labor, the rock and mortar of which they are built having been brought hundreds of feet up the most precipitous places. They have a much more modern look than the valley and cave remains, and are probably in general more recent, belonging rather to the close than to the earlier parts of a long period of occupation.

AMBER is a hard, lustrous substance, which is found in alluvial deposits. It is usually of a pale yellow color, but has sometimes a reddish or a brownish shade, is sometimes quite transparent, but is usually of varying degrees of translucency. It was regarded by the ancients with superstitious reverence, because of its unknown origin, and on account of the electrical phenomena which it exhibited. The philosopher Thales, of Miletus, 600 B.C., noticed that amber when rubbed attracted light bodies to itself, and this observation was the foundation of the wonderful science of electricity, which was named from electron, the Greek word for amber.

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NEW YORK, JULY, 1890.

PLAIN TALK for August will contain a highly interesting story, "*A Pioneer Boy's Adventure on the Missouri Border.*" The different departments will be especially complete, and the entire paper more than usually readable.

BRIGHT, active, ambitious, wide-awake, go-ahead, get-there boys and girls—they're the PLAIN TALK kind.

WE would like to see a little more active interest taken in the different departments of PLAIN TALK; more contributions sent in, more questions asked.

DREAMING may be all very well in its place, but doing is better. If you have a lesson to learn, or a baseball game to win, don't dream about it. Go and do it.

IT SHOULD be noted that time for receiving the prize stories, as per offer in May number, has been extended to September 15th. This is done at the request of those who wish to have the entire summer for writing. The offer itself is printed again this month.

PUSH PLAIN TALK, boys and girls, among your friends. If you like the paper yourself, try to get others interested in it. Tell them of the book offer, "*The Best Books.*" By-the-way, any one of these books, postage free, to any subscriber who will send in two new subscriptions with \$1.00.

PLAIN TALK will be stopped at expiration of subscription when the publishers are so requested, but UNLESS SO REQUESTED it will not be stopped. Subscribers will please note this fact. We have no desire to force the paper upon its readers, and a simple request to stop will be all that is necessary, but unless this request is received it will be continued.

THIS paper is being sent free to a number of reading rooms, libraries and the like, and we have a small fund from which a few more such subscriptions can be paid if our friends will ask for them. A few dollars will go a long way in this direction, and herein is a hint to the charitably inclined who are interested in furnishing good reading matter for young people.

"KEEPING everlastingly at it brings success," is the motto which a prominent firm of advertisers has adopted. Concerning the results which are sure to come from well-directed and continuous application the *Manufacturer and Builder* well says: It is a great mistake to suppose that the best work of the world is done by people of great strength and great opportunities. It is unquestionably an advantage to have both these things, but neither of them is necessary to the man who has the spirit and the pluck to achieve great results. Some of the greatest work of our time has been done by men of physical feebleness. No man has left a more distinct impression of himself than Charles Darwin, and there have been few men who have had to struggle against such prostrating ill health. Darwin was rarely able to work long at a time. He accomplished his great work by having a single aim, and putting every ounce of his force and every hour of his time into the task which he had set before him. He never scattered his energy, he never wasted an hour, and by steadily keeping at it, in spite of continued ill health, and of long intervals of semi-invalidism, he did a great work, and has left the impression upon the world of a man of extraordinary energy and working capacity. Success is rarely a matter of accident; always a matter of character. The reason why so many men fail is that so few men are willing to pay the price of self-denial and hard work which success exacts.

AS THE years go by we are more and more and more impressed with the truth of the statement that "there is room at the top." Too many are content to remain in the crowded ranks below. These ranks at the present day are very much crowded, but there never was a time when there was more "room at the top." The young of to-day who are not willing to forego the frivolities common to youth must suffer from the inconvenience so common to the years that follow. Qualifications are as much above par as they ever were and command a high price. In execution there is little, in preparation there is everything. If a man can perform a given work at all, he can perform it easily. The preparation may have been a study of many years of toil, sacrifice and unceasing labor, but the execution of the work after the preparation has been made is a matter of play. A few days ago we witnessed the work of a glass-blower. With astonishing ease he melted the glass and wrought out all sorts of beautiful designs accomplishing in a few minutes what so few men in thousands can do. Yet he did it with the ease that a tailor draws his thread. But he was not a born glass-blower. Oh no! This proficiency had come to him as the result of long years of preparation. He was an American but had twice been to Europe to learn from the Venitians and Bohemians. His work is now done with ease but it represents many years of application and two voyages across the Atlantic as well as much reading and study. Only a few days ago a well-known Senator electrified the whole country with his meteoric eloquence. Even his enemies and those who do not endorse his views must pay a tribute to his oratory. But it was easy for him—easier no doubt than for the average man to hold a creditable conversation with a friend. But orators are not made in a day. They do not rise up like a mushroom in the night. They reach the heights from which they command the attention of the multitude only through much labor and intense application. So it is in all the avocations of men; and because they are so few who are willing to bring themselves to an intense application, there is, and is likely to remain, plenty of room at the top.—C. M. LEMON.

A Glimpse of Heligoland.

PERHAPS no country on the Globe has been the subject of more disputes and discussions than the seemingly insignificant little island of Heligoland, in the North Sea. It seems ridiculous to think that a rocky island with an area of only one-third of a square mile and a population of but 1950 souls, could be the cause of international disputes, but Heligoland is a more important place than its size and population would lead one to suppose. It is in a position to command the entire German commerce in the North Sea,



and in the event of a war with Great Britain, Germany would find her largest cities practically blockaded, so far as intercourse with the outside world is concerned. It is, like Gibraltar, a natural fortress, impregnable when guarded by a few determined men.

Under these circumstances it was with the greatest reluctance that Denmark relinquished her hold upon the island in 1814, after eight years of bitter strife with England.

The island consists of two portions, known as the Oberland, or the summit of the rocky cliffs, and Sandy Island, a narrow strip of beach on the southern part of the island. It is here that people must land to gain access to the island, the cliffs being inaccessible.

Entering the quiet waters on the south, the visitor finds the little steamer which carried him from Hamburg approaching a wharf, some hundred feet long, surrounded by fishing boats of all sizes and every imaginable description. The majority of the inhabitants are fishermen, and their boats lie along the shore for a considerable distance from the landing place, while beyond these are seen a number of bathing houses, arranged for the use of summer visitors, of whom there are quite a number.

It is but a short distance from the wharf to the lower town, and but a minute's walk to the cliff above. The houses in the lower town are principally those of fishermen.

At the summit of the cliff, reached by ascending a winding stairway, begins the main street of the town. Here are located the few shops the town can boast of two hotels, and most important of all to our readers, the post office. This latter structure is a comfortable frame building, in the upper portion of which reside the post-



master and his family. It is not an imposing-looking building but it is nevertheless a very important place to stamp collectors.



Journeying on still further, the visitor will come upon a number of handsome cottages, among them the house of the Governor, who is appointed by the British crown. This is the elite' portion of the island.

There is a lighthouse on the cliff which may be seen in the engraving. There are about 125 houses on the island, of which nearly 350 are in the Oberland.

The island has an annual income of some \$40,000 from its fisheries which consist principally of lobsters, oysters and haddock, and the inhabitants manage to support themselves and pay the annual interest on a national debt of \$20,000 out of this small sum.

Near the middle of the island the town ends, and one will here find a few small patches of "garden truck," from whence the islanders obtain a considerable portion of their food-supply.

Still further on toward the northern extremity, the land is wholly given to Pasturage, some fifty cows and four or five hundred sheep finding their food there. Not a horse, however, can be found on the whole island.



The Tide at Minas Basin.

THE Bay of Fundy forms a *cul-de-sac* at which the Atlantic Ocean seems to have taken a spite, and at regular intervals pours in its waters viciously and with intent to do all possible harm. Take for instance the harbor of St. John. In most parts of the world a tide from six to ten feet is quite sufficient to satisfy all reasonable demands. In St. John harbor the tide rises twenty-one feet on an ordinary day, and occasionally varies the monotony by pushing the mark up three or four feet, as the humor seizes it, and I was never struck so much with anything in my life as with this advance and receding of the waters, says a newspaper correspondent.

I have described the narrow gorge through which the St. John river is forced into the Bay of Fundy. At low tide where the water drops into the bay, there is a fall of some ten feet, the channel being very rough and totally impassable for vessels of any description. At high water the fall is the other way, the bay falling into the river. This was the first time that I had ever seen a river with the water flowing from its mouth toward its source, and this occurs every day in the St. John. One good effect of the tide is this, that when it is half up or half down, the river is level with the harbor, and then the immense number of timber barges and other craft, which have gathered in the river while waiting for the rise and fall, are able to run nicely and easily out into the harbor. St. John, be it understood, is a great port for shipping. At any day you can see a dozen of the largest ocean-going vessels loading deals for different parts of the world. This timber mainly comes down the St. John river.

NATURAL HISTORY.

Contributions to this department are solicited from all readers. Questions will be answered by competent authorities.

Five Little White Heads.

FIVE little white heads peeped out of the mould
When the dew was damp and the night was cold;
And they crowded their way through the soil with pride,
"Hurrah! We are going to be mushrooms!" they cried.

But the sun came out, and the sun shone down,
And the little white heads were withered and brown,
Long were their faces, their pride had a fall—
They were nothing but to-d-stools, after all.

How to Observe Nature.

I AM often asked to tell people how I see so much in the lives of the birds and animals, or in the face of Nature about me. Though it is the simplest of arts, yet I suppose it is an art which cannot well be communicated.

It is simply a matter of attention. You must pay attention to what is going on.

It is not like the play at the theatre where everything is made conspicuous and aims to catch the eye and where the story clearly and fully unfolds itself. On Nature's stage many dramas are being played at once, and without any reference to the lookers-on, unless it be to escape their notice. The actors rush or strut across the stage, the curtain rises or falls, the significant thing happens, and we heed it not, because our wits are dull or else our minds are preoccupied. We do not pay strict attention. Nature will not come to you; you must go to her; that is, you must put yourself in communication with her; you must open the correspondence; you must train your eye to pick out the significant things. A quick open sense, and a lively curiosity like that of a boy are necessary. Indeed the sensitiveness and alertness of youth and the care and patience of later years, are what make the successful observer.

The other morning my little boy and I set out to find the horse who had got out of the pasture and gone off. Had he gone up the road or down? We did not know, but we imagined we could distinguish his track going down the road, so we began our search in that direction. The road presently led through a piece of woods. Suddenly my little boy stopped me.

"Papa, see that spider's web stretched across the road; our horse has not gone this way."

My face had nearly touched the web or cable of the little spider which stretched completely across the road, and which certainly would have been swept away had the horse or any other creature passed along there in the early morning. The boy's eye was sharper than my own. He had been paying stricter attention to the signs and objects about him. We turned back and soon found the horse in the opposite direction.

This same little boy, by looking closely, has discovered that there are certain stingless wasps. When he sees one which bears the marks he boldly catches him in his hand. The wasp goes through the motions of stinging so perfectly, so works and thrusts with its flexible body, that nearly every hand to which it is offered draws back. The mark by which the boy is guided is the light color of the wasp's face. Most country boys know that white-faced bumblebees are stingless, but I have not before known a boy bold enough to follow the principle out and apply it to wasps as well. These white faces are the males, and answer to the drones in the bee hive; though the drones have not a white face.

When I look closely or listen attentively just at this time (September 20) I discover that the vanguard of the Northern birds is already here; the white-throated sparrows have come. How private and cheerful they are in the bushes and about the tangle of grape vines! They do not appear like emigrants, but as if quite at home. Till a few days ago they were in Maine and Canada, where many of them probably still linger; in a few weeks more they will be in Virginia, and the Carolinas, but they are in no hurry, and seem intent on enjoying the country and the fine weather as they pass. It is an easy task for the eye to distinguish them from our home sparrows, the song-sparrow or the ugly English sparrow. They are the size of the let-

ter, of a darker, clearer gray above, with an ash-colored breast, and a white patch on the throat. Two white lines near the crown are also often easily seen. The song is a sweet, tremulous whistle, and brief snatches of it may be heard as they linger here and there along the September fences and waysides.

Last May as I stood by the window a pretty bird came hopping along on the bricks under the veranda in front of me. What was it? The little boy came and looked and admired, and then my wife came. It was a sparrow they both thought and a very beautiful one. Was it an English sparrow; wife did not know, but the boy thought not.

"Look closely," I said as the bird paused and pecked at some little weed in the bricks but a few feet from us. Then he noted its white crown; ah, the white-crowned sparrow on his way North, the most beautiful, the most distinguished-looking of all our sparrows. The bird lingered about the house all day, sometimes on the bricks, then in the gravel walk, pecking at some little chickweed that seemed to please its taste. Once Nig, the cat, began to creep up on it, but was quickly put to rout by me. The bird conferred a charm to the place; it was like a distinguished guest. The prince of sparrows, surely.

I seldom see more than one or two of a season, and some seasons none; and never before had I seen one so familiar. Only once have I seen the bird on its way South in the fall, and then it sang brief snatches of its sweet song. Its fall route is probably farther west. On its return in the spring it seems to drift eastward, like so many others of our birds.

I can suggest no better lesson in the art of observation than to seek to note and identify this beautiful sparrow in its spring or fall migrations. While watching for it you are very sure to learn something about the other sparrows. You will probably make the acquaintance of the fox sparrow, the Canada sparrow, and the white-throat—all Northern species that tarry briefly with us spring and fall, though the Canada frequently abides with me all winter.

Just as one can train his hand or his foot, or his body, so can he train himself in the habit of observation. I find that I now see and hear the birds whether I am paying attention or not. My perceptions take note of things almost automatically. A new note, a new call, a new form and I quickly become conscious of it. My eye and ear seem to discriminate of themselves.

The summer just gone I passed at a farm-house on the skirts of the Northern Catskills. How could I help but see what no one else of all the people about seemed to notice—a little bob-tailed song-sparrow building her nest in a pile of dry brush very near the kitchen door. It was late in July, and she had doubtless reared one brood in the earlier season. Her toilet was decidedly the worse for wear. I noted her day after day very busy about the fence and quince bushes between the house and milk house, with her beak full of coarse straw and hay. To a casual observer she seemed flitting about aimlessly, carrying straws from place to place just to amuse herself. When I came to watch her closely to learn the place of her nest, she seemed to suspect my intention and made many little feints and movements calculated to put me off the track. But I would not be misled and presently had her secret. The male did not assist her at all, but sang much of the time in an apple-tree or upon the fence, on the other side of the house. Those artists who paint pictures of devoted male-birds singing from the branch that holds the nest, or in its immediate vicinity, do not give the birds credit for all the wit they possess. They do not advertise the place in which their treasures are hid in this way. See yonder indigo bird shaking out its happy song from the topmost twig of the maple or oak; its nest is many yards away in a low bush not more than three feet from the ground.

And so with nearly all the birds. The one thing to which they bend all their wits is the concealment of their nests. When you come upon the sitting bird she will almost let you touch her rather than to start up before you and thus betray her secret. The bobolink begins to scold and to circle about you as soon as you enter the meadow where his nest is so well hidden. He does not wait to show his anxiety till you are almost upon it. By no action of his can you get a clew as to its exact whereabouts.

The song-sparrow nearly always builds upon the grounds but my little neighbor of last July laid the foundations of her domicile a foot or more above the soil. And what a mass of straws and twigs she did collect together! How coarse and careless and aimless at first; a mere lot of rubbish dropped upon the tangle of dry limbs, but presently how it began to refine and come into shape in the centre! till there was the most exquisite hair-lined cup set about by a chaos of coarse straws and branches. What a process of evolution! The completed nest was foreshadowed by the first stiff straw, but how far off is yet that dainty casnet with its complement of speckled eggs! The nest was so placed that it had for canopy a large broad, drooping leaf of yellow dock. This formed a perfect shield against both sun and rain, while it served to conceal it from any curious eyes from above—from the cat, for instance, prowling along the top of the wall. Before the eggs had hatched the docken leaf wilted and dried and fell down upon the nest. But the mother bird managed to insinuate herself beneath it, and went on with her brooding all the same.

A mere trifle was this little bob-tailed bird with her arts and her secrets, and the male with his song, and yet the pair gave a touch of something to those days and to that place which I would not willingly have missed.

I have spoken of nature as a stage whereon the play, more or less interrupted and indirect, constantly goes on. One amusing actor upon that stage one season upon my own premises, was a certain male bluebird. To the spectator it was a comedy, but to the actor himself I imagine it was quite serious business. The bird and his mate had a nest in a box upon an out-house. In this out-house was a window with one pane broken out. At almost any hour in the day from spring to early summer, the male bird could be seen fluttering and pecking against this window from the outside. Did he want to get within? Apparently so, and yet he would now and then pause in his demonstrations, look in the frame of the broken pane, look intently within and after a moment resume his assault upon the window. The people who saw the actions of the bird were at a loss how to interpret them. But I could see at once what was the matter. The bird saw its image in the mirror of the glass (the dark interior helped the reflection) and was making war as he supposed upon a rival. Only the unyielding glass kept him from tweaking out every saucy blue feather upon the spot! Then he would peep in through the vacant pane and try to determine where his rival had so suddenly disappeared. How it must have puzzled his little poll! And he learned nothing from experience. Hundreds of times did he perch in the broken pane and sharply eye the interior. And for two months there did not seem to be an hour when he was not assaulting the window. He never lost faith in the reality of the bird within, and he never abated one jot his enmity toward him. If the glass had been a rough surface he would certainly have worn his beak and claws and wings to mere stubs. The incident shows the pugnacious disposition of the bluebird, and it shows how shallow a bird's wit is when new problems or conditions confront it.—JOHN BURROUGHS.

The Cobras.

OF THE Cobras (*Naja*), two species are commonly recognized; the Cobra di capella (*Naja tritpidians*) of Asia, and the Asp (*Naja Haje*) of Africa. There are marked local varieties of both species, and the *Naja sputatrix* of the Malay countries should probably be recognized as a third species. Those of India have a mark like a pair of spectacles upon the hood; while those of Burmah and the neighboring countries eastward, have only an oval black spot upon it. In India, the common color of this reptile is brown, yet some are of a yellowish straw color; and there are others of every shade between that and black. It grows to a length of five feet, seldom more.

Many writers have contributed to the natural history of this snake, which has been surrounded by such fabulous stories that their contradiction would fill a volume. This snake is very generally diffused over the Indian region, yet from its nocturnal habits, it is less often seen than many

harmless species. It is of inoffensive habits, unless irritated, but is, of course, a dangerous neighbor to have in a house. Although the Cobra di capella is so plentiful in India, we never hear of a European being bitten by one during a residence of many years in that country. They prey chiefly on rats, the presence of which brings them about human habitations—occasionally upon young chickens and commonly upon toads. Not only in Burmah, where the respect for animal life is greatest, but in India also, cobras have been enticed into an earthen jar, and then carried by two natives across a river, or some distance from the village, and there liberated.

In British India, decent Hindoos will not kill a cobra, and if one be found in a house, it is permitted to remain, or else enticed into an earthen jar, and carried away and liberated as described above. Cobras are much dreaded, for they instill the most subtle poison into their victims. Their manners are very singular. When at rest the neck of the animal is no larger in diameter than the head; but when under the influence of the poison or irritation, it raises the front part of its body vertically, holding it straight and rigid as an iron bar, the neck swelling at the same time. This faculty of dilating the neck is as striking a trait in the organization as the rattle of the rattle-snake.

The asp has a less dilated neck; it is of a greenish color, and marked with brown spots. It is smaller than the Cobra di capella, and is found in western and southern Africa, especially in Egypt. It is said that this reptile caused the death of Cleopatra.—LOUIS A. HENNING, JR.

A Good Fox Story.

IN THE spring of 1888 a pair of red foxes took up their home on a Dakota farm. They dug several holes on a knoll in a wheat-field, and soon after four "kits" or young foxes arrived. Every day, while harrowing and sowing wheat in the field, said the farmer, I saw the two old foxes lying on the little mound in front of their home. The kits rolled about in the sun, played with the bushy tail of their parents and enjoyed themselves apparently as much as a group of kittens.

One morning a neighbor came to work in a field adjoining, bringing with him a dog, and the dog, with all the curiosity of his kind, soon began the investigation of both farms.

He was still a long distance from the fox-den when I heard a sharp, warning bark and saw the kits disappear. As I looked the mother-fox lay on the mound, her ears erect, her nose on the ground, all attention. The father of the family, with his tail swinging in the wind trotted toward the dog.

Can he intend to attack him, I wondered. I had never heard of such a thing, and the dog, though not a large one, was still larger than the fox. But Reynard knew his business better than I. He approached the intruder until the dog saw him, when both stopped for an instant, and then the dog gave chase. The fox, with a bark of defiance, turned and ran in a direction away from his home.

At first the dog seemed to gain rapidly upon the fox, but I watched them for nearly a mile before they disappeared in the long prairie-grass and concluded that the fox was able to keep out of the other's way.

In about an hour the dog returned from a fruitless chase, and for a time he contentedly followed his master. Then he began prowling around again.

All this time the mother-fox had remained on the mound, a picture of quiet vigilance; but now, as the dog ventured near, she rose and trotted toward him, and the dog was soon chasing her over the prairie. Hardly had they disappeared when the male trotted back from some hiding-place and took the position vacated by his mate. The dog returned after a time unsuccessful as before.

During the day he was again and again tempted to a chase, first by the male and then by the female, and while the one kept him busy, the other watched over the young, who did not show themselves after the first sight of the dog.

It is hard to say which we admire most: the bravery of the pair in challenging the dog to a race that would have proved fatal had he caught them, their ingenuity in taking turns so that each might be fresh when chased, their skill in leading him away from their young, or their cleverness in throwing him off their track when far enough away.—A. E. F.

LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

* This department is under special editorial supervision. Contributions solicited. Address: "ROSECCA SUNSHINE," in care of PLAIN TALK.

Midsummer Fashion Notes.

LIGHT and bright colors predominate.

Plumes are again seen on imported hats.

For tea-gowns flowing sleeves are much worn.

Violet is the fashionable shade in Paris just now.

Some late new dresses are laced down the back.

Very, very fine jet beads are used in trimming.

With summer dresses French kid shoes in light tan color are worn.

Some extremely pretty dresses are made of printed mull and old fashioned organdie.

Detachable vests which can be worn with different dresses, are in vogue.

The use of ribbon in trimming summer dresses is carried to an excess.

Velvet is much used in combination for dresses for almost all occasions.

A bracelet of flowers is sometimes worn on one arm to correspond with the flowers on the dress.

Gold embroidery on dresses of gray fabric is one of the latest fancies.

Personal and Impersonal.

MRS. Henry Ward Beecher is occasionally seen on the streets of Brooklyn, a little figure, slight, white haired, and folded in a black shawl. She studies to interest herself in affairs which she believes would interest her husband if he were alive.

Mrs. Margaret E. Sangster tells a good story on herself. Some years ago, a representative of a Brooklyn paper called on her one day and asked for some items about herself, to be included in an article on "Brooklyn's Literary Women." It happened to be Mrs. Sangster's busy morning, so she said, scarcely looking up from her work: "Oh, I am only an ordinary, commonplace woman; there is nothing to say about me." The reporter bowed and withdrew. In about a week the article appeared, and at the end of the list of Brooklyn's famous blues appeared these words: "Mrs. Margaret E. Sangster is only an ordinary, commonplace woman; there is nothing to say about her."

Beginning with the July number *The Chautauquan* will be enlarged by the addition of a new department called "Woman's Council Table" in which will appear from month to month articles on some phrase of woman's work and woman's home life. Over fifty well-known women writers have been engaged to write for this department which is opened this month by a bright and chatty article on "What Women Should Wear," by Mary S. Torrey; Kate Carnes writes of "Homesteads for Women," and tells how a woman may acquire independence if not wealth by a few years of intelligent industry; Frances E. Willard describes a visit to the Russian countess, gypsy, scholar, and seer, Madame Blavatsky; Olive Thorne Miller tells of some "New Birds for the House," "Summer Resort Acquaintances" is a healthful and practical talk by Felicia Hillel; "Dinners and Dinner Giving" are discussed by Mrs. Emma P. Fwing, a high authority on such matters, and Mrs. Hester M. Poole writes of the "Growth of a Home." "The Woman's Council Table" will doubtless add to the popularity of *The Chautauquan*.

Hints to Young Botanists.

THE first thing with which the young botanist needs to provide herself is a good simple microscope or hand lens. Dissecting microscopes provided with adjustable eyepiece, stage, hand rests and a mirror for throwing a strong light on the object examined are not very expensive and are a great convenience, for they leave both hands for working with the object. If you have a good hand lens and do not

wish to purchase a new microscope, an ingenious person can easily arrange a stage for the object and a standard in which the lens can be arranged so that it may be raised and lowered, and this will answer the purpose very well. For the dissection of small objects needles mounted in wooden handles are necessary. These may be purchased for a few cents at any stores keeping educational supplies or may also be made at home. Thus equipped, you place your object to be examined on the stage of your microscope, focus the lens carefully, then both hands are free for your dissecting needles, with which you may pick and pull to your heart's content.

In the analysis of flowers the most important requisite is careful and accurate observation. Every step which you take in your analysis must be carefully taken, as a single error will often lead you far astray. Every term used in the analysis must be clearly defined in your mind and its application to the plant in question ascertained, in order that your work may be considered accurate. In collecting your specimens for analysis obtain complete specimens if possible; if that is impossible examine the plant for radical leaves and for any differences between the lower and upper leaves and collect all kinds. Try also to obtain a bud, a full blown flower and the fruit; if the fruit is not ripe obtain an ovary which is as far advanced as possible. The buds are best for studying the stamens and the ripened or partially ripened ovary for answering questions concerning the ovules, their arrangement and others of a similar nature.

The Composite, Umbelliferae and Cruciferae are the most difficult orders of flowering plants to analyze, and as they are very numerous and widely distributed you will be likely to frequently run across them. Practice, however, a microscope arranged as I have described and a pair of dissecting needles will unlock the door to these orders, which will soon prove not alone an easy but most delightful field of study to you.

With the same apparatus which you employ in the study of Phanerogams, you will find that some of the higher orders of cryptogamous plants may be studied, though for all the lower orders a compound microscope is necessary.

If a plant present difficulties which you cannot master, it is best to leave it for awhile, till practice has given you greater keenness of sight and accuracy of perception, when you will very likely find the points which baffled you before easy of mastery. If you feel uncertain as to the correctness of your analysis, perhaps you can get some teacher of botany in a neighboring school or college to verify your results for you.

In pressing flowers for an herbarium use either coarse blotting paper which can be obtained in sheets the same size as the standard herbarium mounting paper, which is 16½ x 11½ inches, or if you cannot obtain this any unsized paper will answer. In addition you need two boards the size of your blotters. When you have collected your specimens for pressing, which by the way should if possible show all the parts of the plant, take first one of your boards, on this place three or four blotters, then a piece of newspaper the size of your blotters. On this arrange your specimen carefully, cover with a piece of newspaper, then more blotters and so on till all your specimens are in press. Then place the other board on top of the pile. For a press I think bricks the best of anything, as the pressure is self-regulating. Five or six bricks, which may be covered with paper for convenience in handling, is about the right weight for ordinary flowers. The dryers should be changed at morning and night for the first two or three days and after that once a day till the flowers are dry. Having the dryers slightly warm when changing them will aid in drying the flowers quickly and in preserving their color.

In mounting use any white paper cut to be the standard size, upon which the specimens are mounted with mucilage, paste or strips of gummed paper. Each specimen should be labeled with its scientific name, its common name if there is one, the place of collection, the date, and name of collector. The different members of any one order should be arranged together in an order cover, which is generally brown paper and is folded over the papers so as to protect them. The name of the order is written in the lower right-hand corner of the order cover for convenience in reference. To preserve the specimen from insects wash over with corrosive sublimate.—[ANNIE M. MITCHELL.]

GAMES AND PASTIMES.

Contributions for this department are solicited in regard to every variety of indoor and outdoor amusement.

The Word Hunt.

WITH "Sub-tropical" as the base word the prizes in last month's contest are awarded as follows:
First prize to Albert Pennell, West Gray, Maine.
Second prize to Emma L. Hauck, 7 Prospect street, New London, Conn.
Third prize to Jennie R. Booth, Delavan, Ill.

The Next Word Hunt.

THE word selected for the next word-building contest is FULMINATORY.

Note this particular: Hereafter all prize papers must be sent to GEO. D. THOMAS, 14 High Street, Waltham, Mass. who is to have charge of this contest.

The rules governing the contest are as follows:

1. Only subscribers can compete, but any one may send their subscriptions in with their list of words.
2. Proper names will not be allowed, and only words found in the body of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary—which will be considered a final authority in deciding all disputed points.
3. Prefixes, suffixes and abbreviations will not be counted, nor will plurals be allowed.
4. Words marked "obsolete" will not be counted, unless they are still current in some one of their meanings.
5. Words of different meaning, but spelt the same, count as one word.
6. Words of the same meaning, but spelled differently, count one word for each spelling, unless one is obsolete.
7. No letter can be used more than once in the same word unless used more than once in the word or words used as a basis of the contest.
8. All lists must be written in ink (or on a type-writer) and must be alphabetically arranged, and the words numbered consecutively.
9. The full name and address of the contestant must be written at the top of the first sheet, and also the word used as the basis of the contest.
10. In case of a close contest, the number of errors and the general neatness of the work will be taken into consideration in awarding the prize.

The contest will close Aug. 20th, and the result will be announced in the Sept. number.

The first prize will be any three of our new prize books; the second prize, any two of the books; the third prize any one. See list in advertising pages. Contestants should also note the paragraph on this page with the heading "A Prize for Prizes."

Prizes for Stories.

IN ORDER to develop a liking for literary work among the many PLAIN TALK readers, the managers have seen fit to make an offer of cash prizes for stories for the magazine, written by subscribers only, and to that end the following offer and rules governing the contest are given:

For the best story of adventure written by a male subscriber, \$5.00.

For the best story written by a female subscriber, \$5.00.

For the second best of either, \$2.00.

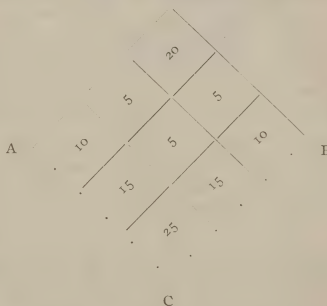
The rules governing this contest are as follows:

1. The story must not contain less than 2,400 nor more than 2,500 words.
2. All subscribers can compete, and subscriptions may be sent in with the manuscript.
3. Packet note sheets must be used, and only one side of the paper must be written on. Thin manilla cut $5\frac{1}{2}$ by $8\frac{1}{2}$ makes excellent copy paper, and provided this is used, the postage on the story will not cost over 4 cents.
4. The leaves must not be stitched, pinned, or tied together with ribbons. Each must be separate and numbered consecutively.
5. The writer's *nom de plume* must appear at the top of the first page, and the same *nom de plume* must be written on a sealed envelope to accompany the manuscript. Inside envelope must be a slip giving both the *nom de plume* and the real name of the writer.
6. The stories selected as the prize winners will be published in PLAIN TALK, as soon as practicable after the close of the contest. Each will be illustrated by PLAIN TALK's special artist, and a portrait of the writer will also be published if desired.
7. All manuscript must be sent to PLAIN TALK Publishing Company, 5 Beekman street, N. Y., and no manuscript will be returned unless return postage is enclosed.
8. The contest will close September 15th, 1890, when each story will be read and the winners announced as soon thereafter as possible.

Waterloo.

THIS is a game that is very suitable for camp or picnic, as the implements are easily procured at the seashore or in the country.

Select a clean, level piece of ground about forty feet in length, and at one end lay out this plan, three feet square, scooping the dirt out of each division about two inches deep:



The figures are printed simply to assist in explaining the game and can easily be remembered. Along the two sides marked with dots drive a row of lath or stakes of any sort, two feet high and six inches apart, leaving an opening six inches wide at the point marked "C." The two other sides remain open. Twenty-five feet back of the corner "C," and parallel to a line drawn from "A" to "B" make a mark six feet in length and drive a stake at each end. This line is the base line and the player must stand within the stakes and with one foot back of it while playing. Now for the implements. Twenty-four small stones as near flat as possible, half of one color and half of another, are all that is required. If the game is played at home iron washers about an inch and a half in diameter can be procured at the hardware store and painted. Each player plays three stones and then gives way to the other. When the twenty-four plays have all been made one game is ended and points are counted from the stones remaining in the field, each stone counting as many as the square in which it lies is marked. If one player should land a greater number of stones in a division than his opponent has in the same one, the opponent must remove his from the field and lose the counts from those so removed, but a player need not remove his own plays if his opponent's greater number were in before he played. If a stone strikes one of the stakes the play counts but makes no points. Five, seven or nine games constitute a set, and the winner may be selected by the number of games secured or by the aggregate number of points made, as may be agreed upon.

The game may be made easier by placing the field on a gentle slope or by reducing the distance from the base line, but in no case should the height of the stakes be lessened nor the length of the base line lengthened. Any number of persons may play by having different colored stones for each player.—C. H. J.—*The Entertainment Bureau.*

A Prize for Prizes.

ON THE 20th of October the publishers of PLAIN TALK will award a prize of a GOLD DOLLAR to the subscriber who has won the most prizes offered in the July, August and September issues. This applies to the word hunt contests, to the puzzle department, and to any miscellaneous offers which may be made in the three numbers mentioned.

Certain Injurious Influences of City Life.

(1.) Disuse of the Upper Extremities.

If there is one general physical difference between the country-bred and the city-bred man, it lies in the size and strength of the muscles of the shoulder and arm. It is almost impossible for a man to live in the country, without using the arms far more than the average city man. This use of the arms has, in both men and women, an important bearing on the general health, since it increases the capacity of the chest, and thereby the surface of lung tissue where the blood is spread out in thin walled vessels, through which the oxygen and carbonic acid easily pass in opposite directions; serving thus the double purpose of feeding the body more abundantly and of removing a constantly accumulating waste product. This richer blood is again driven with greater force by increased heart and arterial action through its circuit. The vital organs are better nourished and the power to produce work is increased. Few will deny that a well nourished body can be trained to do more and better mental work than the same organism in a feebler state. Walking on an even surface, the only variety of physical exercise which most business and professional men get in town, is well known to be a poor substitute for arm-exertion. The reason is partially plain, since walking is almost automatic and involuntary. The walking mechanism is set in motion as we would turn an hour-glass, and requires little attention, much less volition and separate discharges of force from the brain surface, with each muscular contraction, as is the case with the great majority of arm movements. The arm user is a higher animal than the leg user. Arm motions are more nearly associated with mental action than leg movements. A man's lower limbs merely carry his higher centres to his food or work. The latter must be executed with his arms and hands.

A third way in which arm exercise benefits the organism is through the nervous system. Whether this is due to an increased supply of richer, purer blood, or whether the continual discharge of motor impulses in some way stores up another variety of force, we do not know. One thing is certain, the victim of neurasthenia is very seldom an individual who daily uses his arms for muscular work; with this the limit of hurtful mental work is seldom reached.

It seems evident that arm rather than leg movements are essential to increased productive power. If these are neglected, the man as a social factor degenerates, and falls a prey to his stronger fellow man in the race for supremacy and productiveness. It may be remarked that American gout—that condition of the blood which causes our English cousins pain in their feet, and Americans universal pains and increased irritability—has one sovereign remedy so simple that few will take it; and this is, daily, systematic arm-exercise. It is nature's sedative, for which she charges nothing the next day, but gives us sleep instead of insomnia, and cheerfulness in place of discontent. A man may walk in an hour, four miles on a city sidewalk, and reach his desk tired, exhausted of force, and better only for the open air and a slight increase of the circulation. Had he spent half that time in a well-ordered gymnasium, using chest and rowing-weights, and after a sponge-bath, if he had gone by rapid transit to his office, he would have found his work of a very different color, easier to do, and taking less time to perform it. The view for some time held by Hartwell of the Johns Hopkins University, Sargent of Harvard, and others, that arm exercise prevents or does away with nervous irritability, and at the same time increases the absolute capacity for mental work, has not been sufficiently urged or accepted.

(2.) Noise.

A second injurious influence, which pertains exclusively to city life, is incessant noise. This may not be very intense at any time, but when continuous, it acts as certainly upon the nervous system as water falling on a harder or softer stone. Recent experiments upon animals subjected to the sound of a continuously vibrating tuning-fork for a number of hours, one or two days in all, show that the first

effect is that of an irritant to the nerve centers, as certainly as an acid or an electric shock is to muscle fibre.

The noise of a city is, at first, painful and confusing to one unaccustomed to it. I do not maintain that a really bad effect is at once apparent upon most individuals. When people are subjected to such a variety of influences, it is difficult to isolate and measure the result of one. Not frequently, a change from a noisy to a quieter part of the town is most beneficial to especially sensitive individuals. Most noise is unnecessary to the performance of most useful work. It means waste, wear, and tear in the majority of cases. The most perfect are the most noiseless machines, and this applies to the social organism as well. The rattle of badly built wagons over poor pavements, the ringing of milkmen's bells, or the jangling of those on street cars, street cries, and the like, have long been recognized as evils in European cities, and are suppressed in many places. In certain streets in Berlin, heavily laden carts and wagons are never allowed, and in others only when the horses walk. In Munich, the street cars have no bells. Recently, in New York, a measure has been under favorable consideration to abolish the ringing of milkmen's bells, and to have those on the street cars taken off. The immense relief to the residents of a street in Baltimore, where the cars run every three minutes in each direction, when the bells were omitted for several weeks on account of sickness in that street, will not soon be forgotten.

(3.) Jarring.

A more hurtful influence of city life is one that has not received the attention it deserves. Combined with the preceding two, it completes a formidable trio. Very few realize the fact that we who were designed to tread upon soft Mother Earth, have become a race of dwellers upon rocks and stones.

Most healthy men endure these concussions for a long time without very serious effects; while others, who suffer from them, are entirely restored by enforced rest, provided the circulation be at the same time maintained. It is not improbable that some of the long, cob-web-like processes of the nerve cells are damaged by being shaken for months and years over city pavements. Statistics upon such a matter are almost out of the question where insufficient exercise, noise, and jarring of the nerve centres combine with other influences to overthrow the individual or to lessen his productive powers.

If it be, then, injurious to some, to walk daily for years upon stones and bricks, and less so upon earth or softer material, this can be remedied in two ways; First, by changing the material of our side-walks to a more elastic one. Something is needed for pedestrians which will be durable, yet not hard. Some of the varieties of asphalt composition are elastic, but none of them sufficiently durable, so far as I know.

Nature suggests a remedy, in a second way, by covering the human heel itself, where we find a very elastic pad one-half an inch thick, to lessen the jar of walking. If we replace the perfectly hard boot heel by an elastic india-rubber one, we provide an inexpensive and practical remedy, which it would cost the wearer but a few cents a month to keep in repair. This cover has the additional advantage of lessening the noise of hurrying feet, and preventing broken bones in the winter season. If, now, our city authorities will, at some future time, provide gymnasias, as well as libraries and parks, make our large towns quiet, as well as clean, and give us side-walks more like Mother Earth, I believe such a favored community will produce more, and lead, collectively, a happier life than most of our modern towns do now.

"The happiest hour of all the day

Is when you press your couch and say:

'Work's a dune; now welcome rest, good night;'

So Death, who kindly shuts the light,

Is best of life."

—Lizzie W. Champney in *The Woman's Cycle*.

GEOLOGY.

CONDUCTED BY S. H. WOOD.

WHEN geologists first began to examine attentively the structure of northern and western Europe they were almost entirely ignorant of the phenomena of existing volcanoes. They found certain rocks, for the most part without stratification and of a peculiar mineral composition to which they gave different names as, for instance: basalt, greenstons, etc. All these were recognized as belonging to one family and called "trap" by Bergman which came from the Swedish *trappa* meaning a flight of stairs—This name has since been adopted very generally into the nomenclature of the science. (For the benefit of young scholars we will say that nomenclature means *vocabulary*, or means that "*trappa* has since been adopted to a place in the vocabulary of the science.") Hence, reader, you see why "*trappa*" or "*trap*" is so frequently heard in scientific circles.

In many parts of France, Auvergne as an example, strata of limestone, marl and sandstone occur, hundreds of feet deep which contain exclusively fresh water and land shells, together with the remains of terrestrial quadrupeds. A great number, are they, of only land shells that are scattered through these fresh water deposits, and there are districts where there can be found nothing at all but snail shells, technically called *helices*; an instance of this is at the limestone bed between *Roman* and *Mayence* on the Rhine. In our next we will give a theory to account for this which we think is right.

Veins of minerals are frequently found to be disturbed in their regular course. We can give two reasons for this which are considered satisfactory:

- a.—They may be disturbed by other mineral veins.
- b.—They may be disturbed by dead rock.

Chalk, limestone and marble are called calcareous stones. When strongly heated they become lime, the English for *CALX* in Latin, whence their name.

Owing to several reasons our space is limited this issue but we will make up next month.

ALL SORTS.

"And still the wonder grew
That one small head could carry all he knew."

Climbing up the Hill.

BY JAMES WHITCOMBE RILEY.

NEVER look behind, boys,
Up and on the way!
Time enough for that, boys,
On some future day.
Though the way be long, boys,
Fight it with a will:
Never stop to look behind
When climbing up a hill.
First be sure you're right, boys,
Then with courage strong,
Strap your pack upon your back,
And tug, tug along;
Better let the lag-lout
Fill the lower bill,
And strike the farther stake-pole
Higher up the hill.
Trudge is a slow horse, boys,
Made to pull a load,
But in the end will give the dust
To racers on the road.
When you're near the top, boys,
Of the rugged way,
Do not stop to blow your horn,
But climb, climb away.
Shoot above the crowd, boys,
Brace yourselves and go!
Let the plodding land-pod
Hoe the easy row.
Success is at the top, boys,
Waiting there until
Brains and pluck and self-respect
Have mounted up the hill.



The Horner's Nest and the Natural History Collection.

City Visitor.—"What makes little Tommy cry so, Mr. Leeks?"

Farmer Leeks.—"Wall, the fact is, he went out this morning to find a hornet's nest for his natural history collection, and—"

City Visitor.—"And the poor boy couldn't find one?"

Farmer Leeks.—"Naw; the poor boy found one."—*Lippincott's Magazine*.

The Sitt method of manicure soaks one hand in warm soapsuds a few minutes to soften the skin and nails, when they are dried and the nails cut at once. No acid is applied to the nails, as the manicure urgently protests, from experience, that it makes them opaque and brittle, destroying the gelatine which gives them clearness and tenacity. No sharp blade or scraper is ever allowed for cleaning the nails, as digging and scraping roughens the under side of the nails.

Milk will readily remove ink stains if used before the ink is dry; otherwise the best thing is oxalic acid, applied as for fruit stains. Another practical method is to spread the stained part over a plate and rub it with some butter and salt till the stains disappear, then wash with soap and water. Sour buttermilk removes mildew, and benzine, followed by a hot iron and blotting paper, with a wash in warm soap and water, causes paint to disappear.

Wine stains should be washed out in cold water mixed with a few drops of ammonia and spirits of wine. If unfortunately, the cloth has been wetted before the stains are discovered, wet the stain on each side with yellow soap and lay on it some thickly made starch. Rub well and expose to the sun until the stain vanishes. Sometimes, when space is available, the linen is laid on the grass and salt is substituted for the starch, when the stains will disappear in two or three hours.

Next in consideration are the carpets and furniture, to which accidents without number continually occur. If grease spatters your favorite Wilton, mix half a glass of Fuller's earth and the same amount of magnesia with boiling water, apply it hot, and brush off when dry. Small grease spots may be removed with a hot iron and brown paper. To take grease spots from leather apply benzine and then rub over with whisked white of egg, and to remove them from marble make a paste of Fuller's earth and benzine, lay it on thickly, leave it for twelve hours, and through muslin. The danger in this lies not so much in the strength of the solution as in the length of time the material is left in it, and after using, the stained part should be washed thoroughly in cold water. Tea stains usually succumb to an application of glycerine and egg yolk washed off with clear water, but if this fails dissolve a quarter of a pound each of chloride of lime and common soda in three quarts of boiling water and dip the stains in the solution, which should be kept bottled up and ready for emergencies. Wax drippings from the tapers now so fashionably used for lighting purposes can be removed with a hot iron and a piece of blotting paper, or by dipping the part in eau de cologne, which renders the wax brittle, so that it can easily be rubbed off with the finger.

AMATEUR PRESS NOTES.

Address everything to Frank C. Smith, Editor, 36 Orange Street, Waltham, Mass.]

The Conventions.

N. E. A. P. A.

The New England Amateur Press Association was called to order in the parlors of the American House, Boston, by President Cox. Fifteen members were present, and five new ones were admitted. The constitution was revised. A convention photograph was taken, after which the association proceeded to the election of officers. Jas. F. Morton, Jr. was elected President; L. H. Nutter, *Times*, Haverhill, Mass., 1st Vice; W. W. Darby, *Berkshire Comet*, No. Adams, Mass., 2nd Vice; F. C. Smith, *Courant*, Waltham, Mass., secretary; G. H. Lewis, *Enterprise*, Lynn, Mass., Treasurer; C. S. Greene, Boston, Mass., Official Editor. Cottage City was chosen for the next meeting place. A resolution was adopted favoring Boston as the next meeting place of the N. E. A. P. A., and the association endorsed W. S. Danlap, *Messenger*, Milwaukee, Wis., for President, Miss H. C. Cox, *Our Compliments*, Abington, Mass., for Official Editor and E. J. Harcastle, *Delewarean*, Wilmington Del., for Treasurer in the same association. The association also adopted a resolution in favor of holding an exhibit of Amateur Journalism at the World's Fair in Chicago, under the auspices of the National Amateur Press Association.

M. A. P. A.

President Stevens called the Massachusetts to order at 10.30, in the parlors of the American House, Boston. No business of great importance was transacted, but enthusiasm and interest marked every stage of the proceedings. The Treasurer's Report showed the association in a better condition financially than it has been for years. Election of officers resulted as follows: C. A. Sheffield, *Press*, Florence, President; G. H. Lewis, *Enterprise*, Lynn, 1st Vice; W. W. Darby, *Berkshire Comet*, No. Adams, 2nd Vice; C. S. Greene, Boston, Secretary; R. A. Ballon, *High School Review*, Newton, Treasurer; L. H. Nutter, *Times*, Haverhill, Official Editor. Lynn the next meeting place.

M. A. P. A.—N. E. A. P. A. BANQUET.
In the evening the amateurs gathered around the board and discussed the following menu:

Consonne Royal.

Cold Turkey.	Cold Ham.
Cold Tongue.	Cold Corned Beef.
Mayonnaise of Chicken.	Lobster Salad.
Escaloped Oysters.	Banana Fritters.
Chicken Pates.	Italian Cream.
Charlotte Russe.	Fancy Cake.
Lemon Jelly.	Strawberries.
Oranges.	Sherbert.
Ice Cream.	
Coffee.	

After dessert the toasts were presented by Ex-President Chas. E. Wilson. Alfred D. Nash, of *Our Compliments*, replied to "The N. E. A. P. A." Miss Cox, *Our Compliments*, "Our Sectional Organization;" "The Honored Dead," Geo. E. Frye, *New England Amateur*; "The Massachusetts A. P. A.," President C. A. Sheffield, *Press*; "Our

Printers," T. J. Spencer; "Our Lady Editors," Miss M. F. Noyes; "The Amateur Politician," Chas. R. Burger, *Progress*; "Harvard," President James F. Morton, Jr., of the N. E. A. P. A.; "Our Authors," C. S. Greene; "Our Next Merrie Meeting," Mrs. Ella Ward Frye, *Hub Official*.

The *Menu* cards were daintily gotten up, printed and donated by F. J. Spencer, of the Adkins Printing Co., Hartford, Conn. The event was one of the happiest in the association's history, and great credit is due the reception committee in their efficient preparation.

The National Convention comes off July 24-5-6, at Indianapolis, Ind. S. J. Steinberg is the Chairman of Committee on Arrangements.

Amateurs residing in and around Boston, mostly members of the Hub Amateur Journalists' Club, enjoyed the hospitality of Miss Frances E. Parsons in Chelsea, July 5th, a very pleasant evening was passed, each guest having as a souvenir a dainty little card with an appropriate design and sentiment, given with the refreshments. About a week later they met again, this time with Mr. Ernest E. Capen, at West Chester, in honor of Miss Parsons. Social evening was passed and with the refreshments favors in the shape of miniature animals were given. There were present: Miss Frances E. Parsons, Ernest E. Capen, Mrs. Capen, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Frye, Miss Cox, Messrs. Morton, Stevens, Greene and Smith.

W. C. Chiles of *Rising Age*, Philadelphia, and Chas. R. Burger, *Progress*, Jersey City, N. J., were present at the New England convention in Boston.

The publishers of *Santa Claus*, Philadelphia, Pa., have offered amateurs, through E. T. Read, of *Our Compliments* \$1000 for one thousand, or \$300 for three thousand yearly subscriptions to their paper, and if three thousand subscriptions are forthcoming by February, 1891, they will give an additional \$500. They make this offer as their contribution to a permanent fund to be used for the maintenance of a solid national organization.

The *High School Brecia*, Deering, Me., has taken a magazine form, great improvement.—*Philatelic Era*, Portland, Me., has an excellent business showing. The *Amateur Press*, Troy, Pa., has enlarged.—The *Dowagiac News* department "The News Condensed" is one of the best special articles we have ever seen in an amateur paper. The amount of labor contained in it is something immense.—*Drifts'* enterprise in issuing an eight paged Fourth of July edition is commendable. They get out a handsome paper.—W. B. Baldwin reviews some of the Laureate entries in the July, Haverhill, Mass., *Monthly Visitor*. His criticisms are for the most part impartial and well chosen.—C. M. Brough, of the *Clipper*, Bowling Green, Ky., is at work on an amateur directory. He aims to have it one of the best yet published.

Pansies, Bertha York Grant, editress, blossoms out this month. It is a continuance of a department conducted by her five years ago in the *American Sphinx*.—*Twinks* is excellent until one gets beyond the cover. James F. Morton, Jr.'s article on "True Sensationalism" shows a thorough knowledge of the subject handled and a firm belief in his theory.—The *Collector* of New Chester, Penn., is smart and bright for one so small.—*Item*, Clinton, Va., has a smart-looking Fourth of July issue. Better paper, better printing, better matter and more careful work generally, would make a good paper of the *Dover*, Me., *Spy*.—*Acorn*, Macon City, Mo., is a new paper. Put it on your exchange list.

CORRESPONDENCE CLUB.

This Department is established in response to numerous requests from subscribers. All readers are invited to make up their minds as to the following rules. FIRST—Brevity. SECOND—Clearness of statement. THIRD—Decisive knowledge of what is wanted. FOURTH—The desirability of sending themselves, as much as possible, the articles of interest to others as well as themselves. All questions will be given attention as early as possible, although in some cases more delay may be necessary.

L. A. H., Baltimore. (1) Unsolicited contributions are not paid for, neither are short contributions for the different departments; we are always glad however, to find room sooner or later, for bright and brief contributions.—(2) The article regarding the prize stories is reprinted in this number.—PLAIN TALK is six years old.

W. S. Jr., Suffern and others.—The publishers of *The Philatelist*, 419 East 15th Street, are reliable. Mr. Aue, the editor, is probably so busy getting his subscribers in line to vote for the most popular philatelist that he has overlooked your letters. Write him again.

E. J. P., Toronto.—So far as we can make out from your description what you have is simply an old-time cancelling stamp. It is possible that some small office may have run out of stamps and that the letters went through the mails marked in the way described.

L. C. P.—The cement mentioned in June issue is not intended for use under water. We will try to give in August number some cement for such use.

EXCHANGES.

Exchange notices are inserted free of charge, but it must be understood that we can take no responsibility concerning exchanges effected by means of this department, neither can we guarantee the reliability of the articles desired. We will endeavor to compile exchanging to write for the particular address before sending the articles desired. Notices must be plainly and concisely written, folio, and must contain the following particulars: Name, address, and on one side of the paper only. Send as often as you please, but not more than one notice for single issue. Notices of more than 40 words not inserted. Free to subscribe only. Notices are not repeated, i. e., a notice can have but one insertion.

Five stamps on approval at 30 per cent commission.—E. R. Heiberg, 142 N. 6th St., La Crosse, Wis. I have a good silver watch, best save and suit, and about twenty 25 ct. novels (total value \$18.) for self-inking printing press, type writer, stamps or bound books; stamp for reply.—Wm. Sutherland, Jr., Box 161, Suffern, N. Y.

I have 16 foreign coins, 250 envelope stamps, 2 1/4 x 4 printing press and type, and about \$8.00 worth of reading matter in good condition, such as "Golden Days," "Golden Hours," "Young Men of America," 5 and 10 cent novels, etc. List sent on application. Will sell either separately or together or exchange for type, a good Unabridged Dictionary, or other offers. All letters answered.—Geo. E. Ulgall, 312 Comptroller St., Phila., Pa.

Benj. R. Benedict, Paterson, N. Y., has a card printing press and outfit with fancy type for sale or to exchange for a Lawn Tennis net 42 feet long, in good condition.

Webster's Unabridged large dictionary and Vols. VI, VII, and VIII *Golden Days*, for vols. of *Argosy*, or *Golden Days*, Louis A. Hennick, Jr., Baltimore City College, Md.

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